Epistemic Virtues and Vices [B&C]  Spring 2021 Wednesday 11.45—1.45 on Zoom
Miranda Fricker -- Office Zoom Hours: please email me any time to fix a time to talk

Learning Goals
Students will: gain a solid grounding in key topics in virtue and vice epistemology covered week by week; further develop key professional skills such as those of clear oral presentation, including how to compose a good handout or slides on Zoom; further cultivate skills of philosophical discussion (listening well, criticizing constructively, explaining arguments clearly, articulating different points of view or opposing arguments, judicious use of the raise hand/finger rule); cultivate counterpoised virtues of intellectual courage, humility, rigor, honesty, generosity, and imagination; further develop the ability to plan and execute a well-structured philosophical essay; think carefully, critically, and creatively together—all in an online environment.

Requirements and Assessment:

(i) Come to class having carefully read at least the asterisked readings, having made notes on them so that you can participate actively in class—raise questions, confusions, and objections, take turns to speak, and generally help each other understand the philosophical issues raised.

(ii) Please have these readings and your notes in front of you so we can refer back to the texts in our discussions.

(iii) Each registered student must do one or more 10-minute presentations on a reading. Anyone auditing is encouraged to do the same.

(iv) For credit:
Write a 1-2 page plan (mainly bullet points) for your term paper, including bibliography, and email it to me before DEADLINE midnight Friday April 16 so we can fix a 20-30-minute one-to-one discussion of it to help ensure you have a good basis for your term paper, due three weeks later. If you can do the plan earlier, so much the better. You are not graded on your plan—the sole purpose is to ‘scaffold’ your essay to help you write the best paper you can.

(v) For credit:
Write a Term paper 5000-5500 max words (incl. any notes, but excl. bibliography, which should be (Name, Date) style with the complete list of references at the end). Please keep footnotes to an absolute minimum. Do NOT exceed the word limit or you may be marked down.

DEADLINE: email the finished paper to me before midnight Friday May 7 (a few days before our final class). Or if you manage earlier, so much the better

Your grade is determined solely by your term paper itself (for guidance see ‘Tips for planning & writing your term paper’ in dropbox). I exercise judgement to appropriately relativize grades to expected levels for MA or PhD programs.
All readings, week by week, and Syllabus are in our shared dropbox

Feb 3
1. Virtue of Intellectual Humility


Feb 10
2. The Structure of Epistemic Virtues


Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski 1996 ‘The two components of intellectual virtues’ (ch. 4: 165-210) from Virtues of the Mind (OUP)

Cameron Boult, Christoph Kelp, Johanna Schnurr, Mona Simion (2020) ‘Epistemic Virtues and Virtues with Epistemic Content’ in John Greco (ed.) Virtue Theoretic Epistemology: New Methods and Approaches (CUP)

3. Knowledge As A Product of Epistemic Skill (‘virtue/faculty reliabilism’)


*John Greco (2003) ‘Knowledge As Credit For True Belief’ in DePaul and Zagzebski (eds.) Intellectual Virtue: Perspectives from Ethics and Epistemology


Feb 24

4. Criticizing virtue reliabilist views


*Jason Baehr (2011) ‘Virtue and Character in Reliabilism’ ch. 4 in The Inquiring Mind


Ernest Sosa (2015) ‘Virtue epistemology: Character versus competence’ ch.2 of Judgment and Agency (OUP) [responding to Baehr]

March 3

5. Knowledge As a Product of Good Epistemic Motive (‘virtue responsibilism’)


*Jason Baehr (2011) ‘Knowledge and Intellectual Virtue’ ch. 3 in The Inquiring Mind [this is a substantial re-working of his 2006 paper ‘Character in epistemology’ Philosophical Studies 128: 479-514; it critiques Zagzebski]

March 10

6. Virtue of Open-Mindedness


*Jason Baehr (2011) ‘The Structure of Open-mindedness’ *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* [also developed as ch.8 in his book *The Inquiring Mind*]


March 17

7. The Structure of Epistemic Vices

*Quassim Cassam (2016) ‘Vice Epistemology’ *The Monist* 99: 159-180
  --See also his 2019 book, *Vices of the Mind*


--see also helpful overviews by Baehr and Cassam in *Vice Epistemology* collection, Kidd, Cassam, & Battaly (eds.)
March 24
8. Epistemic Blame


*Cameron Boult (forthcoming) ‘There is a distinctively epistemic kind of blame’ Philosophy and Phenomenological Research


[Spring recess over March 31 – NO CLASS]

April 7
9. Character traits and the Situationist challenge—from ethics to epistemology

  [his 2002 book is Lack of Character (CUP)]

  [his 2015 book Character as Moral Fiction CUP]

Duncan Pritchard (2014) ‘Re-evaluating the epistemic situationist challenge to virtue epistemology’ in Abrol Fairweather & Owen Flanagan (eds.) Naturalizing Epistemic Virtue (CUP): 143-154

April 14
10. Vices and Corrective Virtues of Testimonial Injustice

*Miranda Fricker (2007) *Epistemic Injustice: Power and The Ethics of Knowing* (OUP) chs. 1, 2, 4 [– don’t worry, this is too much to read, so I’ll present it]

*José Medina (2013) ‘Resistance as Epistemic Vice and as Epistemic Virtue’ ch. 2 in his *Epistemologies of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations* (OUP)


Benjamin R. Sherman (2016) ‘There’s no (testimonial) justice: why pursuit of a virtue is not the solution to epistemic injustice’ *Social Epistemology* 30(3): 229-250

**DEADLINE FOR TERM PAPER PLANS:** midnight FRIDAY APRIL 16

April 21
11. Vices of Closed-Mindedness and Ignorance

* Heather Battaly (forthcoming) ‘Closed-mindedness as an Intellectual Vice’ forthcoming in Christoph Kelp and John Greco (eds.) *Virtue Theoretic Epistemology* (CUP)


April 28
12. Institutional Epistemic Virtues


May 5

13. Institutional Epistemic Vices


Miranda Fricker (2021) ‘Institutional Vices: The Case of Inferential Inertia’ in Ian J. Kidd, Heather Battaly, Quassim Cassam (eds.) *Epistemic Vice*

**DEADLINE FOR TERM PAPERS:** midnight FRIDAY MAY 7

May 12

14. Epistemic Bubbles and Conspiracy Theories


Have a great summer!